

had asked his friend, Berlin, if he would raise the status of the Hudson matter with Babbitt at a Washington political event Berlin was planning to attend. Havenick and Eckstein then spoke with Berlin after the event – which most likely was a June 19 event relating to the Clinton/Gore ‘96 National Finance Board meeting.

Eckstein had an “absolutely clear” recollection of a three-way call with Havenick and Berlin in late June or early July in which Berlin spoke of seeing Babbitt at a function at the White House and telling Babbitt that his friend Fred Havenick was a really good guy and had an interest in the Hudson project, and wanted to know its status.⁴⁴³ Eckstein recalled distinctly that Berlin then told him that “Babbitt had said something like you can’t get any more blood out of the stone or out of this stone, or a stone, and there was discussion about a lot of people had contacted him [the Secretary].”⁴⁴⁴ Havenick recalled a similar account from Berlin, with the Secretary reportedly saying, “What, are you trying to get blood out of a stone?”⁴⁴⁵ Havenick also understood the comment to be a lament by Babbitt about the number of times he had been approached on the same question. In sharp contrast to these accounts, Berlin testified that he merely informed the Secretary that a friend was involved with the Hudson casino application, and had been waiting for a decision for quite a while; he then asked if Babbitt knew how much longer it would be. He recalled that Babbitt simply indicated that Interior was “working on it,

⁴⁴³Eckstein G.J. Test. at 87.

⁴⁴⁴*Id.* at 87-88.

⁴⁴⁵OIC Interview of Fred Havenick, Aug. 27, 1998, at 7.